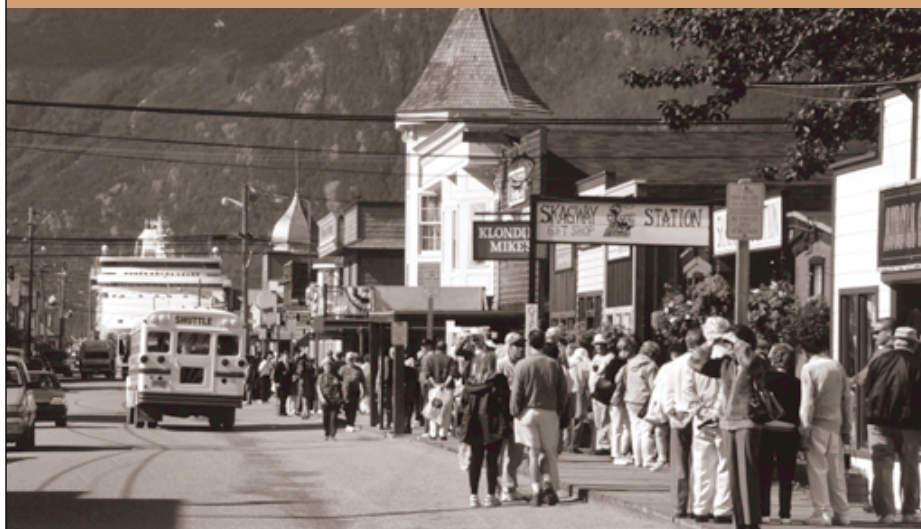




2001 Annual Report



Message from the Regional Director



NPS Alaska Regional Director Rob Arnberger

A year ago, I came to Alaska after a career in national parks in the Lower 48. My immediate impression, shared by many other new arrivals, was to be in awe of the size and beauty of the state.

That view has been validated as I've learned more about Alaska's parks, communities, cultures, and opportunities. This annual report describes recent park activities, as well as expectations for the next year or two. Among the many activities outlined, one stands out as our most important undertaking.

Simply stated, we're expanding our relationship with educators throughout Alaska. National parks have always helped teach lessons because they are real places. The seminal events in our history are represented in American parks: Valley Forge, Edison's laboratory, Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthplace, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. In Alaska, park employees are regular

guests in local schools, describing Alaska history through places like Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park in Skagway and the state's incredible natural resources with examples from Gates of the Arctic or Katmai.

This year, thanks to a cost-sharing partnership with the Anchorage School District and General Communications Inc.(GCI), the National Park Service is making more of its national standards-based learning units available through GCI's SchoolAccess program. Using Internet access, teachers and students will share projects and activities, allowing teachers to use real places close to home to bring lessons to life. One example: students will use math, statistics, and geography to follow Denali's golden eagles. Small transmitters on the birds are tracked by satellites; the information, in turn, can be downloaded by students so they can plot migration routes. The National Park Foundation and Alaska Natural History Association are also working to incorporate the resources of other partners such as the Alaska SeaLife Center, so students and teachers can explore a variety of park topics.

Alaska's natural resources and vibrant cultures are priceless assets, and national parklands help preserve those assets for future generations. Educational programs help assure that future generations understand and are prepared to take their turn protecting the generous but sometimes fragile endowment left by earlier generations.

Meeting the people whose passion for Alaska's resources, her cultures, and her parks has been my greatest discovery in my short year here, and will continue to be a source of great satisfaction. I hope to see you in Alaska's parks and welcome your comments on our work. Feel free to write us at National Park Service, Office of Public Affairs, 2525 Gambell Street, Anchorage, Alaska 99503, or by e-mail at john_quinley@nps.gov.

Visitor Services

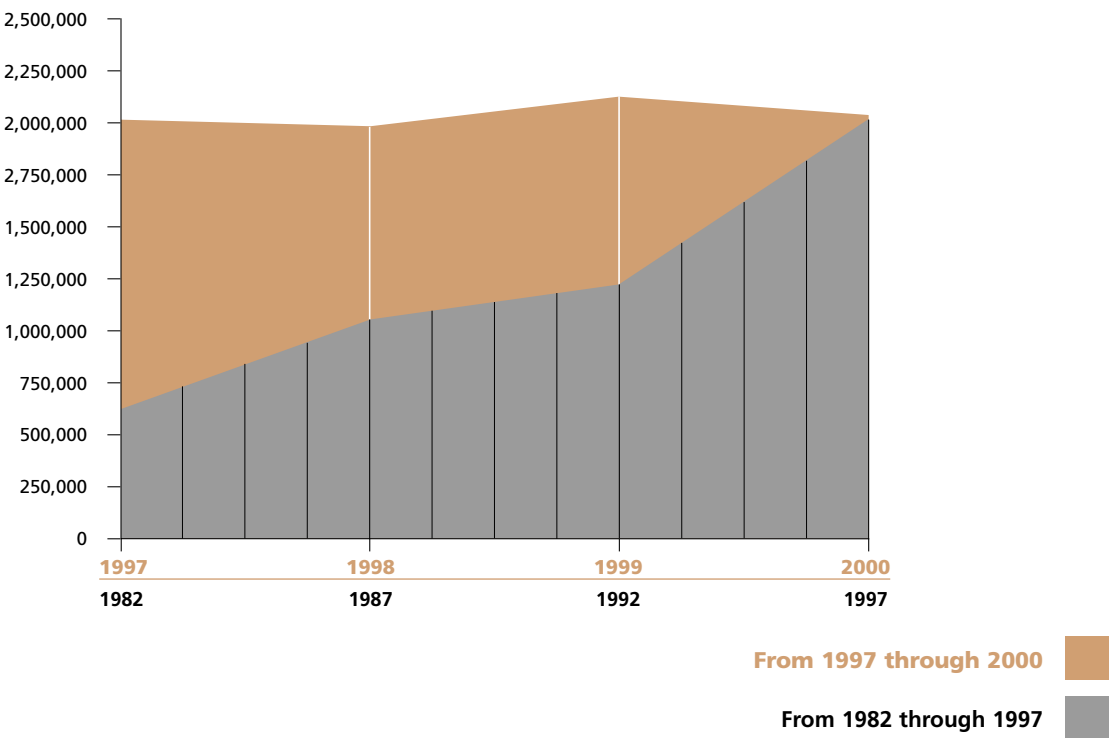
Visitation to Alaska’s national parks has grown dramatically in the past 20 years, but in the last three years, the growth trend has flattened and, in fact, shown a slight decline. The recent numbers reflect a trend seen by many visitor destinations in Alaska, while the historical growth reflects both a general expansion in tourism to Alaska and a particular interest among Americans and overseas visitors in seeing national parks.

Passengers on cruise ships represent a significant portion of the visitors to three southeast parks and to Alaska’s total park visitation. In 2000, visits to Glacier Bay, Sitka and Klondike Gold Rush (Skagway) totalled 1.27 million, or about 62 percent of park visitation in Alaska. Significantly, visitation to those three parks is about 400,000 more than in 1994!

As the number of visitors has grown, so too have the services offered by parks. At Kenai Fjords, the last stretch of gravel road to Exit Glacier was paved this summer, offering a smooth and dust-free drive to the park. The parking lot was also paved, and new restrooms are being built for 2002.

At Glacier Bay, the park — in partnership with cruise lines — offers its Junior Ranger program on board cruise ships as the ships move through Southeast Alaska. More families are travelling by ship, and activities for youngsters are in high demand. Also in Southeast Alaska, Klondike Gold Rush published its first park newspaper, *The Stampeder*, to help visitors plan activities in Skagway and learn about gold rush history.

Visitation to Alaska National Parks



Construction Projects

As visitation to Alaska's national parks has more than tripled in the past 20 years, so too has the need for facilities to accommodate visitors. These needs have included visitor centers, campgrounds, trails, maintenance facilities, and work space for park staff.

Two significant projects moved toward completion in 2001.

A new visitor center and headquarters at Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve in Copper Center is expected to open early in 2002. The \$7.6 million project was built in a village layout, using several smaller buildings. These were less expensive to build and allow several areas to "go cold" during the winter when visitation is lowest. The center will be the park's first full-service visitor center since the park's establishment in 1980.

Sitka National Historical Park is Alaska's oldest park, established in 1910. Its visitor center and headquarters date from the 1960s, when visitation was about 25,000 people per year. In 2000, visitation approached 200,000, due in large part to the thriving cruise ship industry in Southeast Alaska, which has made Sitka a major port of call.



NPS Photo

An aerial view of the visitor center complex at Wrangell-St. Elias.

The administrative offices within the visitor center are being relocated to a historic building downtown, and the newly opened space in the visitor center is being remodeled to accommodate visitor exhibits, enlarged restrooms and a theater. The upgraded facilities are expected to be complete in time for the 2002 visitor season.

Completed this summer was a new bear viewing platform and boardwalk near the Brooks River at Katmai National Park and Preserve. The boardwalk keeps bears and visitors separated, and the new platform allows more visitors to safely view bears feeding on sockeye salmon.

Alaska contractors are doing much of the work on the new \$7.6 million Wrangell-St. Elias visitor center.



NPS Photo

Fee Demonstration Projects

Tax money appropriated by Congress continues to make up the majority of the National Park Service's budget, but increasing proportions of the budget come from fees paid by visitors.

Six parks in Alaska — Sitka, Glacier Bay, Katmai, Klondike Gold Rush, Denali, and Kenai Fjords — charge fees under the federal fee demonstration program authorized by Congress in 1996. About 80 percent of the fees collected at these parks stay with the park. The remaining 20 percent goes toward a national pool of fee money from which all parks can compete for project funding. The funding boost can be significant: Alaska parks have garnered more than \$15 million in fee funding over the past four years for trails, campground improvements, restroom construction, historic building restoration work, and other projects. This includes about \$9 million allocated to the parks that collect fees and nearly \$6 million from the national pool.

Recent accomplishments include the construction of an electric fence around the campground at Brooks Camp in Katmai National Park. The 60-person campground is within an area frequented by dozens of bears. The fencing has nearly eliminated instances of bears coming through the camp and damaging tents and obtaining food from people. At Denali, bridge and trail improvements have eased access at a popular front country hiking area. And Wrangell-St. Elias, which does not collect fees, has been successful in receiving national fee funding for projects such as rehabilitating backcountry public use cabins and stabilizing portions of the Kennecott mine buildings.



NPS Photo

Visitors to Brooks Camp at Katmai National Park benefit from several fee demonstration projects.

The Alaska Region has been aggressively striving toward the National Park Service's goal "to recruit and retain a workforce that reflects the diversity of the nation." The result: this year showed the best ever one-year increase in diversity for the region. Alaska also has grown to be a leader in the service's national effort to create and use partnerships with colleges and universities to recruit, hire, train, and support students in seasonal, temporary, and permanent positions.

Measures taken in the past year include:

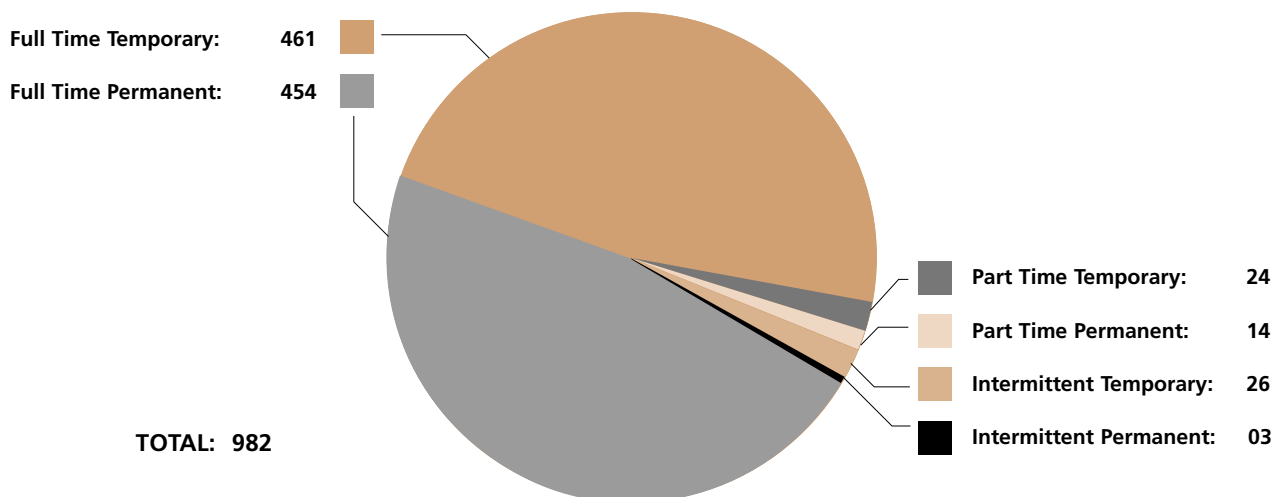
- Established a Diversity Recruitment Outreach Council to develop a formalized plan for focused recruitment.
- Developed Sponsorship and Orientation Program policies to enhance recruitment and retention of future employees.
- Posted a zero tolerance policy on illegal discrimination and hostile work environment at all parks, developed sponsorship and orientation program policies, and issued a comprehensive policy statement on diversity.

- Made significant use of ANILCA Section 1308 local hire authority to bring Alaska village residents into the workforce.
- Visited partner colleges and universities to conduct interviews, teach students about careers in the Park Service, and make job offers.

In 2001, the Park Service brought on board employees through a variety of hiring authorities, including locally hired employees in communities near parks. College students working for the service this year included representatives of the University of Alaska (Anchorage and Fairbanks), Southern University, Tuskegee University, Saint Mary's University, and the Riverside County (California) Transition Partnership Program.

The NPS will continue its efforts in this area to meet national goals for diversity, to recruit and retain highly motivated and qualified employees, and to bring uniquely qualified local employees into our workforce.

Workforce: Alaska Region Summary, July 10, 2001



Education in Communities



NPS Photos

Education as a mission of the National Park Service has become a significant priority not only in the Alaska Region, but across the country. The National Park System Advisory Board — a group that advises the Secretary of the Interior — made two key recommendations that are in concert with Alaska’s move to increase educational activities.

The board recommended that “Education should become a primary mission of the NPS. Budgets, policies, and organizational structure should reflect this commitment,” and it said that “collaboration with organizations and scholars is essential to develop and expand the service’s educational capacity.”

In Alaska, an education initiative was launched nearly a year ago with the goal of helping people participate in the unique, real-place learning opportunities offered by national parks. The **National Park Foundation** and the **Alaska Natural History Association** are our partners in a fund-raising effort to provide a margin of excellence in education. A partnership with GCI and the Anchorage School District is making web-based activities available to teachers and has an initial focus on Denali’s golden eagles, research, and planning. Kenai Fjords — a national park within a three-hour drive of 44 percent of Alaska’s students — teamed with the Alaska SeaLife Center to form one of a handful of NPS learning centers nationwide, and will focus

research and education efforts on the significant marine resources along the park coast.

Other parks have expanded their education efforts as well. At Glacier Bay, the Explorer Program is being tested aboard cruise ships. Its centerpiece is a backpack full of field guides, binoculars, and an activity guide that is loaned to teens for the duration of their cruise. It follows on the heels of a successful cruise ship Junior Ranger program developed by park staff to bring Glacier Bay’s story to life for younger children. This joint venture between the NPS and cruise ship companies has reached tens of thousands of children.

How do you become the “best ranger” in the National Park Service? It’s not easy, but that is what Hunter Sharp is considered by his peers. Sharp, the chief ranger at Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve, was awarded the 2001 Harry Yount National Park Ranger Award in April. The national award honors rangers who have demonstrated outstanding leadership, high standards of performance, dedication to the park ranger profession, and excellence in traditional ranger skills.



Few sights in the field are more stirring than watching a golden eagle soar, take flight, or hunt. But while we've long admired these powerful raptors, until a few years ago surprisingly little was known about the birds, particularly in northern latitudes. Today, thanks to a continuing 13-year study at Denali National Park and Preserve, we've learned a great deal about their reproductive success, food and habitat requirements, survival rate, and migratory behavior.

The work, led by wildlife biologist Carol McIntyre, has found more than 60 nesting pairs of golden eagles in the study area north of the Alaska Range. Nesting areas are surveyed in the spring and summer; in 1997 and 1999, juvenile eagles were equipped with small transmitters. With location information relayed via satellite, researchers can closely log the birds' migratory journeys. "Golden eagles that live in the Lower 48 disperse over fairly short distances. Interior Alaskan birds make long migrations along the

eastern Rocky Mountains, the Great Plains and to Mexico," McIntyre said.

The research has found survival rates among the birds are low, about 20-40 percent in their first year. Starvation is a major factor, but other birds have been found shot, electrocuted, and — on at least one occasion — captured and sold on the black market in Mexico. The project has also been used by local schools, with students using golden eagles to learn about aerodynamics, migration, geography, biology, and art.

Currently, the work in Denali is the only long-term study of golden eagle ecology in northern latitudes. This growing wealth of information helps park managers understand many of the factors that influence Denali's birds and to make better decisions on protecting park resources. Long-term monitoring projects in other parks across Alaska, together with inventorying species found in parks, similarly are providing better information for the public and park managers.

Glacier Bay National Park was recently honored with an NPS environmental achievement award.



NPS Photo

National parks are naturally thought to be among the most “green” of the nation’s establishments, but many park practices still need improving to be environmentally friendly. The Natural Resource Challenge — the National Park Service’s Action Plan for Preserving Natural Resources — aims to improve resource protection and management through the improved use of science and to balance resource preservation with visitation and facility development. The program includes an emphasis on environmental stewardship.

Glacier Bay National Park has set a high standard for Alaska parks, and was recently honored with an NPS environmental achievement award for its accomplishments in implementing recycling, energy conservation, and pollution prevention in a remote location. Energy use reductions resulted in annual operating cost reductions, and eliminated the acquisition cost for a new 20,000 gallon fuel tank and the need for additional generator capacity.

Among the park’s actions:

Implemented a recycling and composting plan, resulting in 22,000 pounds of recycled material shipped to Seattle, 7,031 pounds of glass recycled on-site, and 39,289 pounds of material composted — a 64 percent recycling rate. The changes resulted in cutting fuel consumption by 50 percent.

Bought only four-cycle or diesel engines and committed to phasing out all two-cycle engines.

Replaced lighting fixtures with compact fluorescents and new ballasts, significantly cutting energy consumption.

Replaced three furnaces with high efficiency units, resulting in a fuel consumption drop of 40% in one building alone.

Replaced electric dryers, water heaters and ranges in park housing with high-efficiency propane units.

Repaired leaking potable water lines, saving 750,000 gallons per year.

Switched to non-toxic cleaning products and bio-based hydraulic fluid, chainsaw oil, and re-refined oils.



NPS Photo

The architecture of Russian Orthodox churches has been the single most distinctive landmark in several Aleutian villages for more than 100 years, but many suffered lasting damage during World War II. A long campaign to repair and preserve five historic churches culminated this spring with national recognition of work by the NPS and several partners.

The Aleutian Pribilof Islands Restitution Trust, the Aleutian Pribilof Heritage Group, Inc., and the National Park Service-Alaska Support Office were honored for work on the century-old churches, three of which are National Historic Landmarks.

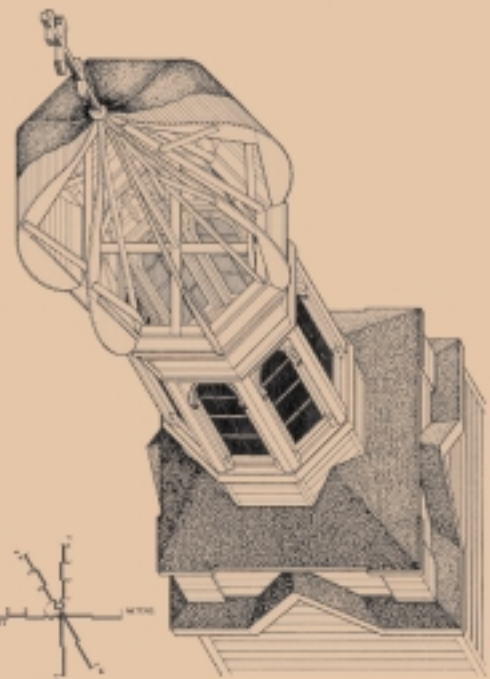
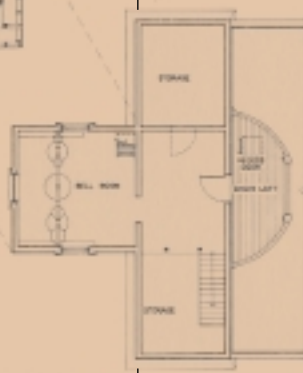
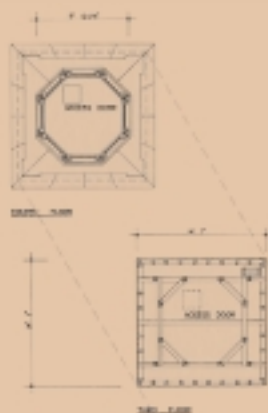
The story began in June 1942, when Japan bombed Unalaska Island and occupied Kiska and Attu islands. The attack led to the abandonment of nine Aleut villages and the imprisonment of residents of Attu. American troops quickly transformed other island communities into military supply bases and the United States removed 881

Aleuts from the villages and interned them in Southeast Alaska. "Residents were given very short notice of their departure. No one realized at the time that it would be three years before they could return, or the damage that would occur," said Linda Cook, special assistant for the Aleutian World War II National Historic Area.

The partnership, formed in 1992, brought together communities, the Trust, the Park Service, and others in an effort to substantiate damage claims, collaborate on architectural and engineering work, and inventory the churches' rare icon and book collections.

Over the last five years, rehabilitation work has taken place at Unalaska, Akutan, St. George, St. Paul, and Nikolski. A new church was built at Atka. Congressional appropriations, state funding, local donations, grants, and corporate sponsorships totaled approximately \$2 million.

"Nineteenth century buildings are very rare in Alaska, and these churches represent the continuum of Aleut and Unangan culture, history, and self-preservation through the periods of assimilation, disease, war, and demographic change," Cook said.



Preserving America's history has long been a job shared by both government and private organizations. Today this stewardship is increasingly a shared responsibility. The Aleutian World War II National Historic Area exemplifies this type of partnership. Established by Congress in 1996 to tell the story of the Aleutian Campaign and the longer history of the Aleut people, the area celebrates its fifth anniversary this year with the opening of a visitor center in Unalaska.

Located in the historically preserved 1943 Naval Air Transport Service Aerology Building, the center tells the stories of war on a personal level through the donations of many veterans and local residents. The Aleutian Campaign was an air war, with pilots depending on radio contact with the Aerology Building to plan their missions. More pilots were downed in the Aleutian Campaign than in any other theater of the war. Radiomen like Lee Zoll of California shared their first-hand knowledge of what equipment was in use and what it was like to listen to Tokyo Rose late at night. The parish council of the Holy Ascension Church donated a Russian Orthodox icon to commemorate the Aleut internment.

The center is the latest addition to this 134-acre NPS affiliated area. Owned and operated by the Ounalashka Corporation, an Aleut village corporation, the area receives Park Service technical planning and preservation support.

The Ounalashka Corporation has directed the development of the visitor center. Funding includes a congressional appropriation to rehabilitate the building and a Save America's Treasures Grant, matched by contributions from the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Heritage Group, the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Restitution Trust, and the City of Unalaska.



Soldiers in Dutch Harbor hauling 155 millimeter guns up the steep face of Mt. Ballyhoo, ca. 1942.

The new Aleutian World War II National Historic Area Visitor Center will open in fall 2001.



Courtesy Museum of the Aleutians

NPS Photo

Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program

Geoblock, a recycled plastic matting tested in parks, is providing a sturdy trail for all-terrain vehicles in many locations.



NPS Photo

The work of the National Park Service is primarily in parks, but increasingly the conservation expertise within the service is being put to work outside park boundaries. The Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program is one example of how lessons learned in the service help Alaska communities.

This summer, Rivers and Trails staff helped install protective trail material at the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge outside of Anchorage. The refuge, popular with duck hunters who use all-terrain vehicles to access the area, has seen portions of its trails turn to muddy bogs. To mitigate the problem, a matting material called Geoblock was installed in an 800-foot test section. The honeycombed panels made from recycled plastic were first tested on trails in Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve. The panels support ATV wheels while, unlike solid materials, allowing vegetation to re-grow

and water to circulate. The successful tests have brought requests for additional NPS Rivers and Trails assistance from other trail managers.

The NPS also has been a key player in a multi-agency effort to re-establish the southern end of the Iditarod Trail. In 1994, a four-mile section of the trail was discovered overgrown but intact in Girdwood, south of Anchorage. At the community's request, the Park Service Rivers and Trails staff led a feasibility study to redevelop the historic route. The planned seven-mile corridor will connect the tidewater area to the town center and to a 25-mile Crow Pass section of the trail. About 3.5 miles of trail has been rebuilt to date, with the infusion of NPS Challenge Cost Share funding matched by the Municipality of Anchorage, and labor by NPS partners Student Conservation Association and Serve Alaska Youth Corps.

Reaching Beyond Parks

The National Park Service's Shared Beringian Heritage Program was established 10 years ago and has become a significant catalyst for research and providing opportunities for local residents to sustain the cultural vitality of the region. The concept of an international Beringian park was first proposed in the 1960s, but there was no specific action for 20 years. In 1986, an agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union led to the development of a proposal for an international park and the development of the Beringia program.

While no recent legislation to establish a park has been offered, NPS supports research

and community projects similar to those envisioned for the park. Expenditures are guided in part by local and regional Alaska residents, and several projects have been initiated in Alaska villages. These projects range in scope from cultural celebrations to educational opportunities for village youths. Increasingly the Beringia projects, whether academic or community based, have a "Russian component" to them, including research in Russia, which increases cross-border awareness and appreciation for the similar natural and cultural values found on both sides of the Bering Strait.

The FY-2001 cooperative agreements include:

Alaska Pacific University Chukotka Tourism Training and Development	\$33,400
Bland & Associates Translation of Provideniya Museum Catalog and Baidarka Construction	\$5,430
Deering IRA Elder/Youth Arts & Exchange	\$24,800
Northwest Arctic Borough School District Arctic Observations: Student Journals	\$41,395
Shishmaref IRA Exchange between Shishmaref and Uelen Ivory Carving Traditions	\$17,000
University of Washington Paleo-Indian Archaeology in the Noatak Basin	\$5,900
Alaska Nanuuq Commission GIS Coverage of eastern Chukotka and Polar Bear Co-management	\$80,250
Alaska Pacific University Document Economic and Cultural Necessity of Subsistence in Chukotka	\$79,970
Environmental Alliance Resource Management and Biodiversity Education in Chukotka	\$25,000
Kawerak, Inc., Eskimo Walrus Commission Chukotka Walrus Monitoring Project	\$38,031
Native Village of Savoonga St. Lawrence Island/Chukotka Language and Cultural Studies	\$50,000
University of Colorado Culture History of Beringia: An Archaeological Synthesis	\$81,886

Fiscal Year 2000 Expense Report, Alaska Region

Construction

Glacier Bay Hydroelectric study	\$465,000	
Wrangell-St. Elias Visitor Center	\$5,749,197	
Katmai-Brooks Camp Area	\$996,306	
Sitka-Visitor Center	\$2,885,496	
Sitka-Rehabilitate Priest's Quarters/Old School	\$816,843	\$10,912,842

Land Acquisition

\$1,742,528

Operations

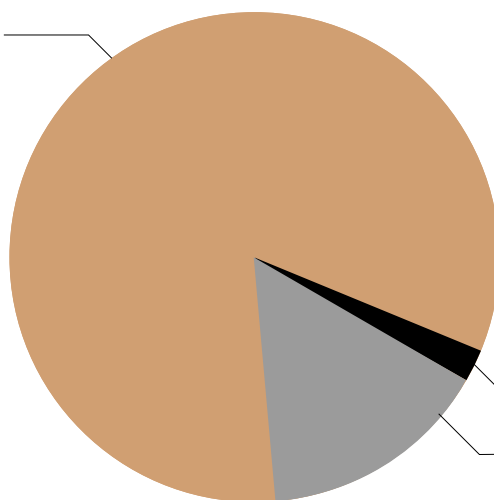
Personal services (salaries, benefits, etc.)	\$37,321,116	
Travel (within parks and Lower 48)	\$3,371,078	
Transportation (supplies and equipment)	\$1,141,700	
Rent, communications, utilities	\$899,368	
Printing and copying	\$191,798	
Services (aircraft rental, architecture and design, contracts)	\$9,627,133	
Supplies and materials	\$4,535,422	
Equipment (computers, vehicles, etc.)	\$1,884,917	
Land and structures	\$3,579,945	
Other (grants, insurance, claims, etc.)	\$4,748,652	\$ 67,301,129

Total \$ 79,956,499

Expense Allocation: Fiscal Year 2000

Operations: \$67,301,129

TOTAL: \$79,956,499



Land Acquisition: \$1,742,528

Construction: \$10,912,842

Grants to Alaskan Organizations



NPS Photo

As part of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, the National Park Service provides funding for a variety of projects, including research, repatriation of cultural materials, and training. Nationally, a total of \$2.3 million was granted this year; more than \$200,000 came to Alaska organizations. The grants include:

Bering Straits Foundation	\$74,800
Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes	\$75,000
Denakkanaaga, Inc.	\$66,015

The Historic Preservation Fund is a federal matching grant program administered by the National Park Service that encourages private and non-federal investment in historic preservation efforts by providing grants to states, territories, Indian tribes, and to the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Since 1968, over \$1 billion has been awarded to organizations across the United States. The FY-2001 grants in Alaska include:

Afognak Native Village	\$49,897
Central Council Tlingit & Haida Indian Tribes	\$35,128
Chickaloon Village	\$49,576
Ounalashka Corporation	\$28,923
Sealaska Corporation	\$50,000
Tazlina Native Village	\$50,000



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